

HOW TO...

Design a newsletter in Word

If you want to create a newsletter but don't want to use a sophisticated desktop-publishing package, all is not lost. Word is more than capable of helping you put something together, as **Mike Bedford** illustrates

You don't need to be experienced in design to produce a professional-looking newsletter, nor do you need complicated desktop-publishing software. Using Microsoft Word, you can easily carry out the basic steps required to create a newsletter.

Here we provide step-by-step instructions on how to create a newsletter in Word. In this walkthrough, we used Word 2003, but the project also works with Word 2002, and any differences are noted.

1 First create a new blank document. Click on the New Blank Document button (its icon looks like a blank sheet of paper) on the toolbar at the top of the screen. The new document will have wide margins; this is fine for letters but not for a newsletter, especially one with newspaper-style columns. Consider the type of printer you'll be using. Inkjet printers require a large bottom margin, but if you're using a laser printer or having your newsletter printed professionally, margins of 0.5in all round are a good starting point.

Depending on your binding method you might also have to specify a gutter margin for the extra space in the middle of two facing pages. This ensures that text isn't obscured by the binding. Select Page Setup from the File menu and make sure the Margins tab is at the

front. Select Mirrored Margins in the Multiple pages drop-down list, unless your newsletter is single-sided, in which case you should select Normal. Then enter values for the top and bottom, inside and outside (or left and right, if you selected Normal for Multiple pages) and (optionally) Gutter margins before clicking OK.

If you'd like to follow this tutorial exactly and your measurements are set to centimetres, go to the Tools menu and select Options. On the General tab, change the Measurement Units to Inches. Change back when you've finished here.

2 You're going to be using newspaper-style columns, but the name of the newsletter should span across the whole of the width of the front page. To do this, you need to divide the document into sections. Select Break from the Insert menu then, in the Break dialog box, select Continuous under Section break types before clicking OK. The text cursor will move down the page by one line. Click to place the cursor in the top line. This is the first section, so you should see Sec 1 in the left-hand side of the status bar at the bottom of the screen. Type in the name of your newsletter, but don't worry about formatting it just yet as you'll do this in Step 6.

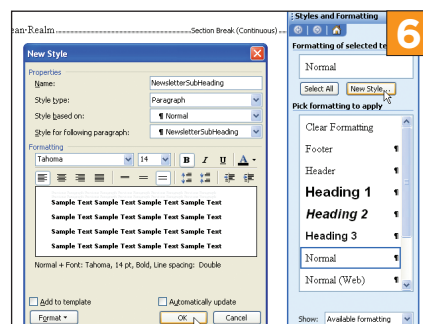
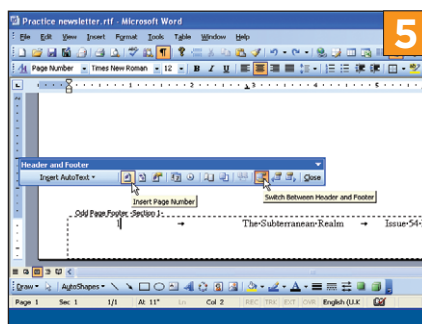
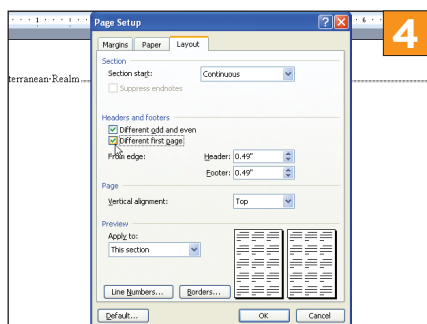
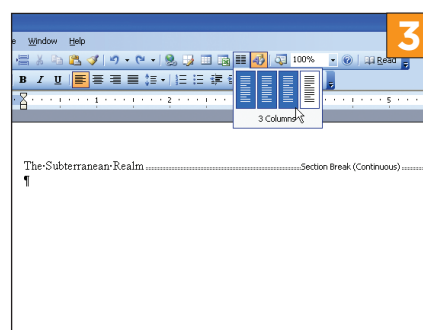
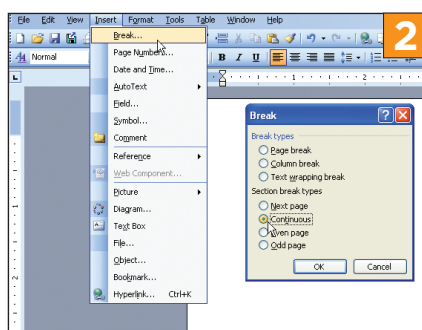
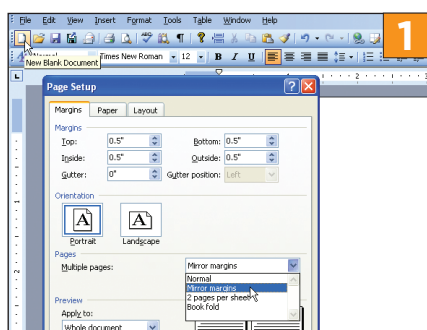
3 Click in the line after the newsletter's name and you'll notice that Sec 2 appears

in the status bar. Click on the Columns button (its icon looks like columns of lines representing text) in the Toolbar. In the drop-down menu, select the number of columns you want. For more than four, and to fine-tune the spacing between columns, select Format, Columns.

4 Your newsletter will look a lot more professional with headers and footers that appear on every page. These usually include the name of the newsletter, the issue number or publication date and the page number.

Select Page Setup from the File menu and click on the Layout tab. Assuming you don't want a header above the newsletter's name on the first page, tick the box next to Different first page. Unless you are producing a single-sided newsletter, tick the box next to Different odd and even before clicking OK.

5 Select Header and Footer in the View menu. The cursor will move into the header area of section 1 and the Header and Footer floating toolbar will appear. You probably won't want a header above the newsletter's name on the first page, so click on the Switch Between Header and Footer button (the fourth from the right) on the Toolbar. The cursor will move into the footer area of the first page, allowing you to type the footer.



There are three areas in the footer – left, middle and right – and you can tab between them. If the tabs aren't to your liking, you can change them using Format, Tabs. In our document, we used the Insert Page Number button on the toolbar to create a page number field, instead of just typing in a number.

Depending on which boxes you checked earlier, you might have three headers and footers to define (first page, even pages and odd pages), but you'll have to wait until you've entered sufficient text to occupy those pages before you can define the corresponding headers and footers. Normally you'll define the odd and even page headers and footers to be mirror images of each other. So when you have more than one page, make sure the Link to Previous button (in Word 2003) or the Same as Previous button (in Word 2002) isn't depressed on the toolbar.

6 You need to define your styles for the various elements, such as headings, body text, captions and so forth. Select Styles and Formatting from the Format menu. In the task pane that appears, move the cursor over the name of the style you want to change. Click on the down-pointing arrow that appears and select Modify. The most common changes can be made in the dialog box that appears. For a full range of options, click the Format button and select an element from the menu. Rather than modifying an existing style, you might want to create one, which you can give a name specific to your newsletter. In the Styles and Formatting task pane, click on the New Style button.

Try to define styles with a fixed line spacing. Go to the Format button, select Paragraph and then Exactly in the Line Spacing box and 12pt in the At box.

7 Move the text cursor to the start of Section 2 (immediately below the newsletter's title). Either start typing in the text or, if the text has been supplied by a contributor, paste it in from another document. If you're pasting in text from another Word document,

first save it as a text file so there is no potential for confusion between the styles defined in the two documents. Working on a paragraph at a time (including the headers and footers), put the text cursor into the paragraph and select the appropriate style from the Style list box in the Style and Formatting task pane.

8 Next we'll add a picture, which is only as wide as a single column. Put the text cursor where you want the image to appear. From the Insert menu select Picture, From file. Find the appropriate image and click Insert. If you define most of your styles to use fixed line spacing, as suggested in Step 6, you'll see only part of the picture. In this situation, create a new style for pictures that have a single-line spacing, then select that style and click on your picture. It should appear at a normal size.

If you want your picture to span more than one column, you'll have to convert it to a floating picture. Click on the picture, then select Picture from the Format menu. On the Layout tab, choose Square and click OK. Drag the picture anywhere on the page and adjust its size using the resize handles that appear around the edges. When you move the cursor over one of these, it will turn into a double-headed arrow.

9 To add a caption to a single-column width image, create a caption style. Then enter the caption below the image and apply the style. For images more than a column wide, you'll have to put both the picture and its caption in a text box. Delete the image from the document. Select Text Box from the Insert Menu. The cursor will change into a cross shape; click near where you want the picture to appear. A small box with a shaded outline will appear. Resize it and drag it into position.

While the text box is still selected, select Text Box from the Format menu. On the Layout tab select Square. If you want to remove the border from around the text box, select No Line under Lines on the Colors and Lines tab. Click OK. Click inside the text box and insert the picture

as described in Step 8. Then press Return and add the caption.

10 You may find that, once you've inserted a picture, the text in one column no longer automatically lines up with the text in other columns. To correct this for single-column width images, select the image (or its caption). Go to Format, Paragraph and adjust the Before and After spacing.

For pictures wider than a column, you can adjust the amount of space below the text box. Make sure the text box is selected (it will have the fuzzy outline when it is). Select Text Box from the Format menu. On the Layout tab, click on Advanced. Go to the Text Wrapping tab. Fine-tune the Top or Bottom measurements under Distance from text.

11 When you've finished, run the spellchecker. Press F7 or click the Spell Check button on the toolbar; it has an icon of a tick with ABC above it. When collaborating with other proof readers, use Word's commenting feature to provide feedback. To add a comment, highlight the relevant text and select Comment from the Insert menu. Type the comment in the coloured balloon. To remove a comment, right-click on it and select Delete Comment.

12 If you're going to distribute your newsletter as photocopies, you need only print the file once. A good way to distribute the newsletter, if all the recipients have email, is by PDF. This keeps the formatting and the colour photos, but saves on ink and paper, not to mention printing costs.

First you need to generate a PDF. In Adobe Acrobat, select Print from the File Menu then Adobe PDF as the Printer name. If you don't have Adobe Acrobat and don't want to buy it, read 'How to... Create PDFs for free', *Shopper* November 2005. A copy of this is on the cover disc. If your file is small, there are websites that will convert it into a PDF format for you, such as www.pdfonline.com.

